5 FAH-5 H-540
CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT (CM) SUMMARY

(TL:ITS-1; 02-13-2002)

5 FAH-5 H-541 GENERAL

(TL:ITS-1; 02-13-2002)

a. CM is one of the most important process improvement tools that project managers can use to evolve and deliver their product in a controlled manner. Knowing the state of the product that a project is developing and knowing that it satisfies the customer's requirements is of utmost importance for any project manager. Since many of the most frustrating problems are often caused by poor configuration management, proper configuration management is critical.

b. Even if an organization has little or no configuration management in place and is just getting started with a configuration management program, the five simple steps below will add a great deal of control and project tracking information:

(1) Formalize the use of reviews before a configuration item is baselined;

(2) Uniquely identify system components;

(3) Establish simple change control;

(4) Build up a repository of configuration items, change requests, and problem reports; and

(5) Restrict access to the project library.

c. A good place to start configuration management is with simple status reports, which may include only the versions one has. When developing a change history, one can expand to a status accounting system, which includes who changed it, when, why, how, and what was affected, as described in 5 FAH-5 H-535. Then, a configuration audit can be performed to make sure approved change requests have been implemented completely and correctly. Once established, a functional configuration audit would be the next step to ensure that the system matches what was approved, and nothing more. Then a physical audit can be added to ensure that the documentation matches the changes.

d. It is important to implement requirements traceability from the beginning through systems testing, implementing life-cycle work-product consistency checks. This means that if a requirement change request has been accepted, one must go through life-cycle phases to determine if it is necessary to make a corresponding change. Without the ability to trace through the life-cycle process, it cannot be done. Once one has the design document, he or she needs the ability to go backward and forward to look at the other life-cycle work products.

e. After expanding to multi-site, multi-country, and multi-cultural projects, one may be looking at implementing at multiple levels of control boards and need to ensure that all parts are being managed and controlled with consistency and integrity. Otherwise, it cannot all be brought together and integrated into a working and maintainable system. Ultimately, some project manager is responsible for the entire integrated product!

5 FAH-5 H-542 THROUGH H-549 UNASSIGNED